

DRAFT City of Minneapolis Commercial Garden Criteria for a City-owned vacant property to be considered for market gardens and urban farms*

March 3, 2015 CD&RS Meeting Agenda Item #15 - 2014 Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Third Annual Report
Supporting the Food Council's land access policy goals related to urban agriculture: a) extending the lease terms for City-owned parcels to greater than one year, with a preferred minimum of five years; b) allowing commercial growers to lease or purchase City-owned parcels, with the understanding that community gardeners would have priority access; and c) expanding the total number of City-owned lots available for urban agricultural lease or sale.
HE&HC Staff Reports: [Homegrown Annual Report RCA](#); [Homegrown Membership](#); [Homegrown Highlights](#); [PowerPoint](#)
Action Taken: CPED Housing and Economic Development staff directed to review the vacant property list to determine which parcels are developable based on economic conditions and lot size and thereupon develop a set of policy recommendations regarding the Food Council's land access policy goals, to present to the Community Development and Regulatory Services Committee.

PROPOSAL: For a City-owned vacant land to be considered for commercial gardens, it must meet one of the following criteria:

Description ¹	Comments	Lease Term ²	Sale
Category A	Properties with conditions that pose marketing challenges (i.e. north/south facing lots, on high vehicular traffic corridors, adjacent to identified problem properties, etc.).	1 Year	No
Category B	Properties slated for Multifamily Housing or Business Development projects that are NOT needed for site assemblage OR being actively marketed for redevelopment OR subject to a pending sale OR have exclusive development rights.	1 Year	No
Category C	Undersized Properties that are 4,000 square feet or less and not adjacent to a city-owned property. Strategy: Offer parcels for side yard sale to the owners of the adjacent properties, if the adjacent propert(ies) are not larger than the average parcel on the block; if no interest, lease until adjacent owners express interest to purchase or there is a change in ownership OR consider for sale as a permanent commercial garden, if appropriate.	3 Years ³	Yes ³ (After Lease Term)
Category D	Undevelopable Properties with issues, including lack of public utilities, challenging public utilities (e.g., cross sewer connection), challenging soils, challenging topography, irregularly shaped or has less than a 35 foot frontage and no alley access. Strategy: Offer parcels for side yard sale to the owners of the adjacent properties, if the adjacent propert(ies) are smaller than the average parcel on the block; if no interest, lease until adjacent owners express interest to purchase or there is a change in ownership OR consider for sale as permanent commercial garden if appropriate.	5 Years ³	Yes ³ (After Lease Term)

¹A property could fit more than one category.

²Each new garden lease will be for one year and evaluated for a renewal based on the Lease Term in the table above. Subsequent renewal or sale (post the Lease Term) will be considered on a maximum term as illustrated in the table above. Community gardens are prioritized over commercial gardens.

³Undersized and Undevelopable Properties may be leased **OR** may, after identified side yard sale strategies are pursued, be considered for sale as permanent commercial garden pursuant to the Real Estate Disposition Policy, if appropriate. Community gardens are prioritized over commercial gardens.

NOTE: The City of Minneapolis Community Garden Criteria for a City-owned vacant property to be considered for community gardens will be developed separately.

DRAFT City of Minneapolis Commercial Garden Lease Standards for a City-owned vacant property to be leased for market gardens and urban farms*

The City of Minneapolis Commercial Garden criteria and standards to lease and sell certain City-owned parcels within CPED's inventory for commercial gardens (market gardens and urban farms) if adopted, will assist in advancing strategies to improve the growing, processing, promotion, distribution, consumption and composting of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods in Minneapolis.

1. Liability insurance requirements for gardens will be reduced from \$2 million to \$1 million, in response to requests from non-profit community organizations that sponsor community gardens. The number of community organizations with the financial capacity to sponsor community gardens would be increased by this change, while significant coverage in liability insurance would still be available to any impacted party.
2. In the event of lease termination by the City for purposes of redevelopment, gardeners would not be required to vacate the property any sooner than the end of the current growing season.
3. The City will collect a commercial garden lease fee of five percent of the fair market value of the property or a sales price based on the fair market value of the property. The City will also collect an administrative fee of \$25.00 and a refundable damage deposit of \$250.00. If the property is sold at the end of the lease term to the lessee, the lease fees will be subtracted from the purchase price.
4. Accessory buildings and improvements may be approved by the City pursuant to the City's Building Code and Zoning Code requirements.
5. Utilities, including water and electricity, will be used, maintained and financed by the lessee.
6. Use and storage of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals on site only as permitted by law.
7. Soil testing for all garden properties is required before entering into a garden lease and clean-fill raised bed gardens will be used where required by soil testing.
8. In residential areas, garden hours will be between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm.
9. No on-site parking will be allowed on garden lots.
10. Garden lots will be maintained year-round, including sidewalk and snow removal, by the lessee.

Additionally, the City will cause the removal of any unauthorized use of city-owned properties for gardens and unauthorized gardeners will be directed to follow the process for leasing and appropriate garden site.

*The City of Minneapolis Commercial Garden Criteria and Lease Standards are proposed and pending City Council approval.